

DEMOCRATIC GERMAN REPORT

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CUT ALL TROOPS

New Soviet Proposals on Germany

One-third of all the foreign troops stationed in the two halves of Germany should be withdrawn during 1957.

This is one of the important steps towards world disarmament proposed by the Soviet Union in a new peace plan published on November 17th.

This all-round reduction in the numbers of foreign troops stationed in Germany should be strictly supervised, the Soviet proposal said. The "supervision" was not defined more closely, but presumably some sort of international control is envisaged.

The one-third cut would only be the first step to a complete withdrawal of foreign troops: another point in the Soviet plan called for a complete abolition of military, naval and air force bases in other states within the next two years.

Other points in the far-reaching Soviet plan called for big reductions in the total armed forces of all states; a ban on all atomic weapons and the destruction of all stocks of such weapons; and the creation of an effective international control system to supervise all the disarmament measures.

The Soviet Union, earlier this year, took unilateral steps to cut the strength of its forces stationed in East Germany. A total of 33,500 men were withdrawn, in addition to the 20,000 men withdrawn during 1955. No equivalent action has yet been taken by Britain, France and the United States, which all maintain large forces in West Germany.

E. GERMAN PENSIONS BOOST

Big Help for Aged, Disabled

All old-age and disability pensions in the German Democratic Republic have been raised by 30 marks monthly. This means an increase of about 30% in average pension rates. The pension increase, approved by the East German Parliament on November 16th, will come into effect on December 1st, and all pensioners will receive their new and larger allotments before Christmas.

The new pension law will raise the minimum old age pension to 105 marks monthly, and the minimum widow's pension to 95 marks monthly. The average monthly wage in the German Democratic Republic is about 380 marks.

Announcing the new pension rates, Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl stated that the government would have liked to increase pensions even more, but that it was physically impossible for the state to do more at the moment: a further increase depended upon a further development of the economy.

As a result of the war there is one pensioner in the German Democratic Republic to every two-and-a-half persons gainfully employed, probably a higher proportion than in any other country.

The new pension increases mean an absolute improvement in the situation of pensioners, since prices

remain stable in East Germany, with a steady downward trend in some sections.

Prime Minister Grotewohl announced that in case of price increases which may accompany the abolition of food rationing, planned for next year, this would be compensated for by a further pension increase.

The all-round increase in pensions is the first step in a far-reaching reform of the pension system, under which pensioners will ultimately receive at least 50% of the sum they earned while still in full employment. This is one of the targets of the Second Five Year Plan, ending in 1960.

"THE GERMANS ARE COMING"

Documentary Film Plays to Packed Houses

A full-length documentary film on a serious subject has been packing cinemas all over the German Democratic Republic for the past three months. Incomplete returns show that to date the film has been seen by nearly one quarter of the total population.

The film is entitled "Du und mancher Kamerad". This almost untranslatable title, which means roughly "You and some of your mates", is a quotation from a poem written more than one hundred years ago by Wilhelm Hauff, which tells of soldiers riding out to war: "Yesterday still on your proud chargers, today shot through the breast... you and many more."

And it is a fitting title for the film, which shows how German soldiers rode out, in 1914 and 1939, "on proud chargers" to conquer the world — and how their adventure ended.

The film consists almost entirely of shots from old films — the Kaiser reviewing his troops, Hitler reviewing his troops, shots from Nazi news-reels, and shots from top-secret Nazi films showing atrocities committed in the Warsaw Ghetto: but it is much more than just a chronicle of the past fifty years.

It is, in the very best sense, an educational film. The audience see how the arms kings, the Prussian militarists, and the big landowners got together to plan war: and they see how the ordinary German people allowed themselves to be fooled time and time again: how they put their skills, their work and their courage at the disposal of these evil forces.

But other films of a similar character have been made in the past, in Germany and in other countries. What is so distinctive about this film? It is probably the fact that this film really looks at events "from the inside".

Previous anti-war films made in the German Democratic Republic have often tended to present things not as they were, but as the Socialist directors of these films wished they had been. They often seemed to say: "This is what the Nazis did: this is what the imperialists did: the German people were against it."

And the fact of the matter is that the great majority of Germans gave their active or passive support, first to the Kaiser, and then to Hitler.

This film, for the first time, gets right inside the problem, and says, not once but repeatedly: "Look at

this picture: this is what we, the Germans, did."

When the film shows pictures of German troops invading Belgium in 1914, the commentator says: "And the dread word spread: The Germans are coming!"

When the film shows pictures of German troops invading Belgium and France in 1940, the commentator says again: "And once again the dread word spread: The Germans are coming!"

And this honesty has its full effect on the audience. The older members of the audience at least are fully aware that they stood and cheered when Hitler reviewed his troops: and the film shows them very explicitly that they gave their enthusiasm — and their courage — to a rotten cause.

The honesty and clarity of this film will do a lot to help to ensure that they do not make the same mistake again.



Two pictures from the film: Above, Goebbels decorates a German schoolboy pressed into the Wehrmacht. Below, a scene from a "top secret" Nazi film on the Warsaw Ghetto.

"PROSPERITY ON COLLECTIVE FARM" — Seen by "Times" Correspondent

Conditions on collective or cooperative farms in Eastern European countries have come in for heavy criticism in the past few weeks, both in the capitalist press and in various socialist countries.

Readers of GERMAN REPORT will therefore be interested to read what the "Times" London, had to report about one collective in the German Democratic Republic. The report, written by "A Special Correspondent recently in East Germany" and published on November 14th, stated:

"The collective had once been the estate of a petty nobleman, and its members still lived in the tiny cottages of his former labourers, as many of them had been. They were slow men whose lives had been largely spent in the isolation of these two rows of cottages and the monotony of the wheatfields. They were not attractive, but they were the happiest East Germans your Correspondent happened to meet during a journey from the Baltic coast to the Czech frontier.

"They each received five hectares and a loan after the war when land reform was introduced. Then the usual process of collectivisation began, and today there are 26 members with a total area of 130 hectares, or about 320 acres. Ten peasants resisted, and remain outside. These figures are persuasive; it would seem that each man had a free choice and that no pressure was applied. This obviously was not so. The early flight of farm workers to west Germany was an indictment of the system. No soil-sodden peasant would forsake good land and migrate to a strange area unless there was something radically wrong.

"It is difficult to be specific now, but, as the party members here say, there were many mistakes in the past. The production norms were unrealistic, and collectivisation too rapid. Many of the men were agricultural labourers and not farmers, and they did not know what to do with the land they were given. This is now shrugged off as past history, and so far as this collective is concerned the survivors are happy enough.

"To keep them on the land, and to maintain production in this labour-starved region, norms have been set low and arrangements for the dis-

posal of the large surplus are generous.

"Mechanisation is provided at less than cost, transport and fertilisers are also cheap, and there is now little or no direction from the centre. The result is that the collectivised peasant is a much-favoured citizen, who at present is doing rather better than all right.

"The prosperity of the collective was plain to see in the account books and the homes of the members. It is a complete collective; that is, everything is communally worked and owned, with the exception of a half hectare for each member's private cultivation and their own cattle, generally a cow or two and some pigs. Most of the heavy work is done by the local motor tractor station, which charges 20 marks or less than £ 2, for the deep ploughing of one hectare.

"The land is good, and normally yields about 2,400 kilogrammes a hectare, of which 900 kilos must be delivered to the government procurement agency at a price of 20 marks for each 100 kilos. The remainder can be sold to the "Handelsorganisation" (HO), which in this case is an official free market, for 40 marks for each 100 kilos, or disposed of elsewhere even more profitably. Similar arrangements exist for the disposal of milk, meat, poultry and eggs. The price differentials are 18.5 pfennigs and 60 pfennigs a litre for milk and 10 pfennigs and 40 pfennigs for eggs. Only about a third of the produce is sold to the Government.

"The norm is largely theoretical, a normal eight-hour day; and payment is on the unit system, a unit being 13.80 marks plus three and a half kilos of grain and six kilos of potatoes. The chairman receives fifty units a month, cattle and dairy men sixty and field workers thirty-five. Thus the field worker is entitled to 492 marks a month, about £ 45, and a considerable amount of grain and potatoes.

"In fact, the collective holds 3 marks of each unit, 105 marks a month, for emergencies and bad harvests, but the worker has a sizable second source of income from his own plot, pigs and cattle, which are grazed on collective land. The total monthly income in cash terms of the farmer-worker, after insurance and tax deductions,

seems to be about £ 65, and about £ 80, for cattle and dairymen. House rents are nominal.

"These totals would have been difficult to believe if your correspondent had not visited some of the cottages. They were small and crumbling, but were expensively furnished and equipped. The chairman, who does not earn the highest pay, lives in a three-roomed cottage, carpeted, and stuffed with ugly but costly furniture. Judging from the prices of furniture in Neubrandenburg, he must have spent at least £ 300 on furnishings for the living room.

"There was a large radio-gramophone with tape recorder, which cost almost as much, and in the sideboard ornate wine glasses and bottles of Russian, Hungarian and Bulgarian wine. There were four cases of good beer in the hall, of which we drank profusely from the bottle, and outside, the apple of his eye, the justification of Communism and the lack of personal liberty, a new small car. It cost 13,000 marks.

"By any material standards, these peasants are fortunate men; their essentials are provided at low and uneconomic rates, and they are allowed to sell much of their produce at grossly inflated prices. This system was presumably necessary to stop the flight from the land and to improve food production, and its success is apparent not only on the collectives but also in the announcement that food rationing is to end next year.

"What will happen then is not clear, but the H.O. and the Konsum (cooperative retail society, ed.) organisation will certainly continue to be the official food distributors and some price fixing programme is expected. German agriculture has long been a protected industry.

German Books in China

Anna Seghers is the most popular modern German writer in China, and her books "The Seventh Cross", "The Dead Stay Young" and "The First Step", have been translated and published in editions of about 20 thousand each. Stephan Hermlin, Willi Bredel, Friedrich Wolf, Stephan Heym, Bodo Uhse and Bertolt Brecht are also well known.

GENERAL SPEIDEL, WAR CRIMINAL

— W. GERMAN ARMY LEADER

Lieutenant General Hans Speidel is today head of the Armed Forces Section of the West German Defence Ministry, and member of the General Staff of the new West German Wehrmacht.

During the nazi period he was Chief of General Staff of the Hitlerite Wehrmacht in occupied France. Recent researches in nazi archives have disclosed that in this position he was directly responsible for butchering hundreds of French resistance fighters and Jews, and for the deportation of uncounted Jews to certain death in nazi extermination camps.

Documentary evidence for his crimes is contained in a number of documents signed or initialled by Speidel, photo-copies of which have just been published by the Committee for German Unity in Berlin.

Here are the relevant passages from just one of the many documents available:

The Military Commander
in France

Command Staff Sect. 1c

No. 1100/42g

Paris, February 28th 1942.

SECRET

The report on the political situation, which has not changed particularly since the January report, will follow with the situation report for March.

Attached is the report on "Situation and Internal Security" for February 1942.

For the Military Commander

(signed) Speidel

Chief of General Staff.

(attached)

Situation and Internal Security

... The following retaliatory measures were recommended in the period under review:

In retaliation for various events and bomb attacks in Paris, six Communists and Jews were shot on February 3rd 1942.

100 Communists and Jews were transferred to Compiègne for deportation to the East.

In retaliation for an attack in Elboeuf... ten Communists and Jews were shot on February 14th.



GENERAL HANS SPEIDEL

In retaliation for an attack in Rouen on a member of the Wehrmacht... 25 Communists and Jews were shot on February 21st. Widespread round-ups of Communists and Jews were conducted in Rouen which led to many arrests.

In retaliation for an attack in Tours on a member of the Wehrmacht 15 Communists and Jews were shot on February 21st.

In connection with these measures orders were given that 1000 Communists and Jews in the whole occupied territory should be transferred to German custody. They are being held for deportation to the East.

In retaliation for the attack on the electrical installations of the Auboué pit, 70 Communists and Jews were arrested with the view to future deportation. Further measures have been threatened if the perpetrators of the attack cannot be found.

In retaliation for the bomb attack on a cafe of bad reputation in Brest, the following measures were taken with the agreement of the naval commander:

1. Lengthening of the curfew for three weeks.
2. Closing of about 40 cafes of bad reputation.
3. Arrest of all male owners and employees of these cafes, together with other Brest citizens known to be hostile to the Germans, and their deportation to the East.

What happened to these French patriots arrested "for deportation to the East"? The answer is contained in a teleprinter message addressed to the Military Commander in France on March 22nd by the General Quartermaster, reference number 2/3688/42:

"The Chief of the Security Police and the Security Service has announced that the 1000 Jews arrested in Paris in the course of retaliatory measures, and now held in Compiègne Camp will be sent in a special train to Auschwitz, probably on March 28th."

Today Speidel, who was fully responsible for these arrests, shootings and deportations, occupies one of the leading positions in the new West German Wehrmacht.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

WAR CRIMINALS RUN WEST GERMAN STATE

Full Details on Sixty-One Nazi Criminals Now Serving as Judges, High Civil Servants in West Germany.

SEE NEXT PAGE

NAZIS IN THE NEWS

Listed War Criminals in Key Posts in West Germany Today

Here are the names of Germans working today in prominent positions in the West German Government and civil service who were named as nazi war criminals in the lists prepared by the United Nations and by various countries occupied by the nazis.

Professor Wilhelm Abel. Head of the agricultural faculty, Goettingen University. Former nazi official in occupied France. International War Crimes List No. France A — 16/182.

Dr. Friedrich Aldenhoff. Landesgerichtsrat in Duisburg Provincial Court. Former nazi legal officer in occupied Poland. Polish War Crimes List No. 1075.

Otto Andres. Ministerialrat in West German Ministry of Labour. Former Deputy Gauleiter of Danzig-West Prussia. United Nations War Crimes List No. Poland A — 221.

Dr. Andritschke. Amtsgerichtsrat in Dusseldorf. Former Amtsgerichtsrat in Poznan (occupied Poland) in Special and Higher Court. Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Alfred Berndt. Ministerialrat in Rhineland-Pfalz Economics Ministry. Former SS General active in occupied territories. International War Crimes List No. 11X/698.

Dr. Brunner. Ministerialdirektor in Bavarian Ministry of Economics. Former official in nazi Ministry of Propaganda. International War Crimes List No. x I/164 and 28 bx/GK—154.

Dr. Brunner. Oberregierungsrat in Nuremberg Finance Office. Former official of nazi administration in occupied Belgium. International War Crimes List No. Belgium A—28/7.

Dr. Buehler. Deputy Director of Baden-Wuerttemberg Labour Office. Former State Secretary in nazi administration of occupied Poland. International War Crimes List.

Dr. Friedrich von Buelow. Head of the economic department of the West German Embassy in Asuncion, Paraguay. Former head of industrial police in Krupps arms factory. International War Crimes List No. 62/1337 (at request of U.S.A.).

Dr. Burmeister. Amtsgerichtsrat in Pelve. Formerly Landgerichtsdirektor in Radom (occupied Poland). Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Dally. Landgerichtsdirektor in Wuppertal. Former Amtsgerichtsrat in Bydgoszcz (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Delke. Amtsgerichtsrat in Hamburg-Wandsbeck. Former Landgerichtsdirektor in Bydgoszcz (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Eberhard Denk. Regierungsdirektor in West German civil service. Former nazi administrator of Polish State Bank. International War Crimes List No. Poland S—10/156.

Dr. Engelbrecht. Director of the Hanover Finance Office. Former official in SS Economic Administration, Auschwitz Branch. International War Crimes List No. 3x XV/179.

Dr. Engelhardt. Regierungsdirektor in the West German Ministry for Atomic Affairs. Worked in nazi administration in occupied Holland. International War Crimes List No. Holland A 1/153.

Dr. Felmy. State Attorney in Oldenburg. Former State Attorney in the Bydgoszcz (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named on Polish War Crimes list.

Dr. Joachim Fiedler. Ministerialrat in West German Refugee Ministry. Former Labour Director in occupied Czechoslovakia. International War Crimes List No. CSR A—31/106.

Otto Fratzner. Amtsgerichtsrat in Ingelheim. Polish War Crimes List No. 1389.

Dr. Fraustein. State Attorney in Koblenz. Former State Attorney in the Poznan (occupied Poland) Special and Higher Court.

Dr. Hans Garcia. Ministerialdirektor in West German Ministry of Agriculture. Former nazi agricultural director in Cracow, occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. A 10/503.

Gerkinsmeyer. Landgerichtsdirektor in Bielefeld. Former Landgerichtsdirektor in the Poznan (occupied Poland) Special and Higher Court. Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Gottschalk. Oberregierungsrat in Cologne Finance Office. Former official of nazi bank administration in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 80/230.

Dr. Wilhelm Griebel. Oberregierungsrat in Offenbach Finance Office. Former nazi official in occupied Holland. International War Crimes List No. Holland 58/251.

Dr. Albert Groll. Regierungsdirektor in Bavarian Finance Ministry. Former Commandant of slave labour organisation in occupied Holland. International War Crimes List No. Holland 63/210.

Dr. Haag. Director of Hessen Financial Court. Former public prosecutor in Katowice, occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 53 x/GK—125.

Dr. Haidinger. Federal Judge. Former Landgerichtsdirektor in Lodz (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Frelherr von Hammerstein. Forestry Director, Lower Saxony. Former nazi official in occupied Belgium. Belgian War Crimes List No. A—1/4.

Dr. Heine. Oberregierungsrat in West German Statistical Office, Wiesbaden. Former leading official of Reich Economic Ministry, responsible for plundering occupied territories. International War Crimes List No. Poland 80/283.

Eberhard Heinze. Deputy of Lippstadt Finance Office. Former nazi official in occupied territories. International War Crimes List No. GK—404/62 x.

Dr. Hohfeld. Regierungsdirektor in Hessen Ministry of Justice. Former nazi official in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 32 x/167.

Dr. Hubernagel. Senior State Attorney in Dusseldorf. Former State Attorney in the Radom (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Hucklenbroich. Landgerichtsdirektor in Wuppertal. Former Landgerichtsrat in Poznan (occupied Poland) Special and Higher Court. Named in Polish Crimes List.

Dr. Kleist. Customs Counsellor in Cologne Finance Office. Former official in nazi Ministry for Occupied Eastern Territories. International War Crimes List No. 60 x/NO—2585.

Dr. Kruschewski. Oberlandesgerichtsrat in Hamm. Former Landgerichtsrat in Bydgoszcz (occupied Poland) Special Court.

Dr. Lengert. Regierungsdirektor in Stuttgart Finance Office. Former nazi official in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 1144/60 x/VII.

Dr. Letsch. Director of Bremen Labour Office. Formerly occupied various offices in nazi occupied Europe. International War Crimes List No. 909/40 a x.

Michalowski. Amtsgerichtsrat in Muenchen-Gladbach. Former Landgerichtsrat in Bydgoszcz (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named on Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Montebaur. Senior State Attorney in Aachen. Former State Attorney in Poznan (occupied Poland) Special Court.

Erich Mueller. Amtsgerichtsrat in Dortmund. Polish War Crimes list No. 5085.

Muhs. Oberlandesgerichtsrat in Hamm. Former Landgerichtsrat in Radom (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named in Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Horst Neubauer. President of the Senate of the Provincial Social Court (Landessozialgericht) of North-Rhine Westphalia in Essen. Polish War Crimes List No. 5085.

Fritz Ohl. Director of the Hessen Central Bank. Former bank director in occupied Poland. Polish War Crimes List No. 6402.

Dr. Fritz Paersch. Vice-President of the Hessen Central Bank. Former director of Reichsbank, responsible for plundering occupied Europe. International War Crimes List No. Poland 80/574.

Dr. Rehm. Regierungsrat in Muenster Finance Office. Former nazi official in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 32 dx/GK—188.

Riepenhausen. Oberlandesgerichtsrat in Bamberg. Former Landesgerichtsrat in Leslow (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named in Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Heinz Ritter. Oberregierungsrat in Coblenz Finance Office. Former district officer in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List 1144/60 x/VII.

Dr. Schade. Oberregierungsrat in West German Housing Ministry. Formerly leading police official in Lodz, occupied Poland. International War Crimes List 8 x/869.

Dr. Schindler. Oberregierungsrat in the administration of Lower Franconia. Former "art expert" in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 865/14 x.

Dr. Schroetter. Ministerialrat in West German Transport Ministry. Worked on Marshal Goering's economic general staff. International War Crimes List No. 46 x/164.

Dr. Schroth. Oberregierungsrat in Rhineland-Pfalz Ministry of Finance. Former nazi official in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 818/34 x.

Dr. Siegmund. Oberregierungsrat in Hessen Ministry of Labour. Former nazi official in occupied Poland. International War Crimes List No. 127/16 x/II.

Dr. Hermann von Siemens. Member of Bavarian Atomic Commission. Director of Siemens Trust, which employed thousands of slave labourers from occupied Europe. Listed as one of 42 principal war criminals on U. S. Senate List (Kilgore Committee).

Dr. Gustav Simon. President of the Trier Postal Administration. Former chief of nazi civil administration in occupied Luxembourg. International War Crimes List No. 11 x/NO—5500.

Toni Stockmayer. Regierungsbaurat in North Wuerttemberg administration. Commander of 2nd SS Pioneer Brigade in occupied Poland. Polish War Crimes List No. 5707.

Dr. Freiherr von Streit. Ministerialrat in West German Exchequer. Former nazi official in occupied Europe. International War Crimes List No. 1032/26 x.

Harro Thomsen. Director of Finance Office, Hamburg-Wandsbeck. Former SS officer and Gestapo official in occupied Poland. Polish War Crimes List No. 4468.

Dr. Timm. Ministerialrat in Schleswig-Holstein Ministry of Labour. Former nazi official involved in deportations from occupied France and Poland. International War Crimes List No. 31/614, 615 and 38 b x/GK—303.

Dr. Welz. Amtsgerichtsrat in Siegen. Formerly Federal Court Director in Lodz (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named in Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Wex. Landgerichtsdirektor in Arnberg. Formerly Federal Court Counsellor in Lodz (occupied Poland) Special Court. Named in Polish War Crimes List.

Dr. Max Winkler. Regierungsdirektor of Baden-Wuerttemberg Economics Ministry. Former head of custodianship office for occupied eastern territories. International War Crimes List No. 900/14 x.

Vorbrodt. Amtsgerichtsrat in Sobernheim. Formerly Landgerichtsrat in Bydgoszcz (occupied Poland) Special Court.

Win a New Reader

Fill in the name and address of a friend, work-mate or acquaintance on the form below, and send it to

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We shall be pleased to mail sample copies of the paper to him or her.

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BERLIN NOTEBOOK

Do you know what "Panurgism" is? Probably not, since the term was only invented a week or two ago by my friend Ivor Montagu, well-known British Communist.

Let us have a look at Ivor Montagu's own definition of his new word: "The name for this deviation is my own coinage; it derives from the character in Voltaire's 'Candide' who always taught, especially at the most awkward moments, that all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds."

New Name

Although the name is new, I am afraid that Panurgism is a very old complaint. Every general in history who announced a retreat by stating that his troops had moved triumphantly to new and better positions, thus shortening their lines of communication, was obviously a Panurgist: I am sure that readers can think of many more examples of this state of affairs.

And I fear that it was not only generals who were affected by the complaint: it has been widespread in the People's Democracies, including the German Democratic Republic, in the past few years.

In all the People's Democracies there have been big ups and downs: the fundamental basis for a new society has been created by the socialisation of the means of production, but there have been great set-backs too. And instead of admitting these set-backs frankly the Panurgists, at all levels, have loudly proclaimed that they were in fact victories.

Classic Case

A classic case of Panurgism occurred in the German Democratic Republic in April 1953. At that time there were considerable difficulties in the food supply situation, and at the same time there was a drive to extend socialisation to small industry, retail trade and craftsmen's enterprises. I do not want to debate here whether this drive was right or wrong; the way it was done was undoubtedly wrong — thousands of small industrialists, shopkeepers and others were simply deprived of their ration cards. And to add insult to injury, this step was announced, and I quote from the official announcement, as "a systematic improvement in the standard of living".

By John Peet

"Neues Deutschland", the official organ of the Socialist Unity Party carried a headline on April 11th 1953 calling the ration card withdrawal: "A Further Step to Raise the Living Standards of the Working People". I think every reader will agree that this was Panurgism in full swing.

I am glad to say that only two months later, on June 11th 1953, the government of the German Democratic Republic stated frankly that it had "made a series of mistakes such as the decree on the reorganisation of the ration card system", and this measure was immediately cancelled, but of course much harm had already been done.

I regret to say that Dr Panurge had his effect on GERMAN REPORT too. We did not, it is true, trumpet the ration card restriction as a great victory, but we just tucked it away amongst a listing of other changes, some of which were of a positive nature, and made no real attempt to explain it.

Which brings us, of course, to the question as to the extent to which this paper has suffered from Panurgism.

In the past few days I have been looking through the back copies of this newspaper, for all of which I accept full responsibility, and I am afraid that we have sometimes not been so candid as we should have been.

I do not mean that we have not told the truth: ever since the paper was founded in 1952 I have tried to the best of my ability to present a

true picture of what is going on in Germany, both halves of Germany: but in a number of cases we have simply presented the statements and announcements of the spokesmen of the government of the German Democratic Republic without expressing any doubts we may have had about the complete frankness of these statements.

Definite Viewpoint

It is obvious that a paper like GERMAN REPORT has a definite point of view: we are in favour of socialism; we welcome the fact that in the German Democratic Republic a start has been made in establishing the first German state in history which is not dominated by arms kings, big landowners and Prussian militarists; we shall continue to fight in every way possible against the remilitarisation and renazification of the West German state, which we consider to be the greatest danger to peace in the world today.

In presenting the news from Germany we shall continue to stress the very positive advances made in the German Democratic Republic: we certainly cannot rely on the millionnaire press in the west to do this job for us.

But developments in the past few months have proved that no good can come of glossing over mistakes and shortcomings: and we intend to deal with them too, if or when we see them.

Too Many Answers

Bertolt Brecht, the great German dramatist who died on August 14th this year in East Berlin, was not only one of the finest contemporary playwrights but also the author of quite outstanding poems and short extremely biting anecdotes.

Many of these anecdotes dealt with a mythical personage called Herr Keuner, and one of them in particular seems to be strikingly applicable today:

"I have noticed", said Herr K, "that many people are shying off our doctrine because we seem to have an answer for everything. Would it not be better propaganda to draw up a list of questions which we consider to be utterly unsolved?"

I have quoted this short anecdote from a translation of a number of similar fragments made by H. Fraenkel and published in the London "New Statesman and Nation" on November 3rd.

Democratic GERMAN REPORT

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